

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5504

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, February 28, 1997

Title: An act relating to electrical installation.

Brief Description: Exempting from certain electrician licensing provisions people who install pumps to deliver well water to homes.

Sponsors: Senators Prince, Hochstatter and Morton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/17/97, 2/28/97 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Anderson and Newhouse.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Franklin, Fraser and Heavey.

Staff: Aurora Almeda (786-7488)

Background: Under current law, a person engaging in the electrical construction trade must have a current journeyman certificate of competency or a specialty electrician certificate of competency. Certification is provided for, but is not limited to electrical work on residential, domestic appliances, pump and irrigation, limited energy systems, signs, and nonresidential maintenance.

Concern has been expressed by those in the industry regarding the requirement of certification for persons installing domestic pump and irrigation systems.

Summary of Bill: Persons installing pumps that do not exceed five horse power, for the purpose of delivering domestic well water to a home or homes are exempt from the licensing provisions for electricians.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Most rural areas do not have access to licensed electricians. Traditionally, a person who installed well-pumps in rural areas simply did the wiring aspect of the installation. Such a job typically takes five minutes. This is no longer possible since the

Department of Labor and Industries now requires that a licensed electrician conduct the wiring aspect of the installation. The requirement is too costly and time consuming for rural people who must wait for a licensed electrician to come out to finish installation of a well-pump, and pay an additional fee for that licensed electrician to install the well-pump.

Testimony Against: The Electric Board recently granted the Well-Drillers Association the right to wire electric pumps up to five horse power with the limitation of 50 feet on the length of wiring. A specialty license may be more appropriate for those in rural areas rather than an absolute exemption. Although some wiring jobs may be simple, other types of wiring may also be very dangerous. Permitting such an exemption would place public safety at too great of a risk since the exemption could apply to a large housing development.

Testified: PRO: Senator Eugene Prince, prime sponsor; CON: Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Association; Richard King, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.